

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A self-supporting, ~~An~~ ion-conducting polymer membrane for a fuel cell, comprising:

an ion-conducting a polymer made of a polymer-forming hydrocarbon material; and

a metal-containing gel hydrolyzed and/or; ~~condensed or hydrolyzed and condensed~~ from a metal alkoxide, the metal-containing gel being located within the polymer and/or; chemically bonded to the polymer, ~~or located within and chemically bonded to the polymer~~;

wherein the weight ratio ~~a proportion~~ of the metal alkoxide ~~in relation to~~ the membrane ~~is being~~ between 25% and 1%.

12. (Amended) The ion-conducting polymer membrane as recited in claim 11, wherein the membrane contains from 75% to 99% ~~is formed with a proportion~~ of polymer-forming hydrocarbon material by weight ~~of about 75% to 99%~~ and from ~~of~~ 25% to 1% of metal alkoxide by weight.

13. (Previously Presented) The ion-conducting polymer membrane as recited in claim 11, wherein a thickness of the membrane is 100 μm or less.

14 (Previously Presented) The ion-conducting polymer membrane as recited in claim 13 wherein the thickness of the membrane is between 5 and 30 μm .

15. [no claim 15 in preliminary amendment]

16. (Currently Amended) The ion-conducting polymer membrane as recited in claim 11, further comprising a filler, ~~the filler being introduced prior to the formation of the metal-containing gel from the metal alkoxide.~~

17. (Currently Amended) The ion-conducting polymer membrane as recited in claim 16, wherein the membrane contains a proportion of the filler by weight, in relation to the membrane, lies between 0.5% and 1% by weight filler.

18-23. (Cancelled)